



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

NEWARK ICE AGENTS SEIZE \$5.7 MILLION & LUXURY VEHICLES IN MASSIVE BENEFITS FRAUD INVESTIGATION

Investigation Result of Ongoing Cooperation Between Benefits and Enforcement Arms of Homeland Security

NEWARK, N.J. -- A citizen of India living in New Jersey is in federal custody and agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have seized \$5,724,592 in assets from the suspect's bank and brokerage accounts in a massive immigration benefits fraud investigation.

Narendra Mandalapa has been charged with Fraud and Misuse of Visas, violations of 18 USC Section 1546. The charges were filed in United States District Court in Newark. Mandalapa is currently in the custody of the United States Marshals Service.

During the investigation, ICE agents discovered that Mandalapa filed nearly 1,000 possibly fraudulent labor-based petitions on behalf of Indian and Pakistani nationals seeking to enter or remain in the United States. The petitions were for skilled computer workers. Both U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and ICE continue to investigate those aliens who received the fraudulent immigration benefits. Investigators are also working to determine how many people fraudulently entered the country and how many already in the United States may have received fraudulent labor benefits.

This investigation is a product of a joint anti-fraud initiative undertaken by ICE, USCIS and the Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General. The investigation began when a special fraud detection unit of USCIS uncovered a pattern of fraud in petitions for immigration benefits submitted by Mandalapa through one of his companies. The USCIS Fraud Detection Unit in St. Albans, Vermont, referred their analysis to the ICE Benefit Fraud Unit (IBFU), also based in Vermont. The IBFU then coordinated with ICE Special Agent in Charge in Newark to begin the field investigation that resulted in the arrest and asset seizure.

Investigators uncovered two shell companies in New Jersey owned by Mandalapa were created solely for the purpose of filing fraudulent labor-based petitions for foreign workers. During the investigation agents armed with search warrants seized computers and documents from the corporate address of Cybersoftec, Inc.

Agents believe that at least \$2.1 million dollars came from fees paid by individuals seeking fraudulent benefits. Since the accounts were used to hide those illegal profits the government seized all money in the accounts. The assets seized come from four bank accounts in Edison, N.J., and two brokerage accounts in

New York City. Also included in the seizures were a Mercedes SUV and a Lexus sedan with a combine value of \$100,000.

Acting Newark Special Agent in Charge Thomas E. Manifase said, “Immigration benefit fraud is a multi billion dollar business and can not be tolerated. This type of fraud not only steals jobs from legitimate workers but it also provides individuals to illegally enter the United States and creates a risk to national security and public safety.”

Manifase pointed out that the investigation is an outstanding example of how two agencies in the Department of Homeland Security cooperate to uncover and dismantle an organization dedicated to undermining the legal immigration system and making huge profits.

Jennifer L. Mickey, Chief of the USCIS Fraud Detection Unit said, “Individuals who used fraud to obtain immigration benefits are breaking the law. We take very seriously our responsibility to protect the integrity of our immigration system by combating benefit fraud.” The USCIS Fraud Detection Unit, co-located at the USCIS Vermont Service Center, is a branch of the national USCIS Fraud Detection and National Security Unit.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.